

**REMARKS**

Claims 12-23 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 12, 14 and 18-23 are amended. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action objects to claims 19-23 for incorrect dependency. Claims 19-23 are amended to obviate the objection. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 12-19 and 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,309,243 to Tsai. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 12 recites comparing the first signal level with the second signal level and selecting the signal level closest to a predetermined exposure amount as a selected exposure amount, determining an optimum exposure amount by changing the selected exposure amount by a prescribed amount smaller than a difference between the fixed first exposure amount and the fixed second exposure amount, and performing an optimum exposure operation of the photoreceptor device at the determined optimum exposure amount for recording an image.

As discussed at col. 2, lines 8-49, Tsai replaces the normal exposure level (N) by determining whether the pixel from the normal exposure level (N) is underexposed or overexposed and whether the pixel from a digitized image generated at an exposure level above or below the normal exposure level ( $N \pm 1$ ) is within or outside a predetermined range. Tsai does not select a signal level closest to a predetermined exposure amount because Tsai does not disclose a predetermined exposure amount as a value to determine an optimum exposure amount.

In addition, in Tsai, the reconstructed image is created using five exposure amounts N,  $N+1$ ,  $N+1/2$ ,  $N-1$  and  $N-1/2$ . In other words, in Tsai, one of these five exposure amounts is selected as an optimum exposure value. Tsai does not teach or suggest determining an

optimum exposure amount by changing the selected exposure amount by a prescribed amount smaller than a difference between the fixed first exposure amount and the fixed second exposure amount, as recited in claim 12. Therefore, Tsai does not teach or suggest performing an optimum exposure operation of the photoreceptor device at the determined optimum exposure amount for recording the image. Accordingly, claim 12 is patentable over Tsai.

Claim 18 recites a calculation device that compares the first output and the second output, wherein the one closest to a predetermined exposure amount is selected as a selected exposure amount, and determines an optimum exposure amount by changing the selected exposure amount by a prescribed amount smaller than a difference between the fixed first exposure amount and the fixed second exposure amount, and a controller that performs an optimum exposure operation of the photoreceptor device at the determined optimum exposure amount for recording the image.

For reasons similar to those stated above for claim 12, Tsai does not teach or suggest these features. Thus, claim 18 is patentable over Tsai.

13-17, 19 and 21-23 are patentable for their dependence on claims 12 and 18, as well as for the additional features they recite. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Tsai in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,162,913 to Chatenever et al. (Chatenever). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Chatenever does not overcome the deficiencies of Tsai with respect to claim 18. Therefore, claim 20 is patentable for its dependence on claim 18, as well as for the additional feature it recites. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

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